

Message Text

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61
ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-04 INR-05 LAB-01

NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 INT-05 DODE-00 DOTE-00 FMC-01

CG-00 COA-01 DLOS-03 SWF-01 NIC-01 PA-01 USIA-06

PRS-01 SP-02 IO-04 AID-05 TRSE-00 /054 W

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R 051905Z NOV 74
FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 914

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EO 11652: NA
TAGS: ELAB, CI
SUBJ: MARITIME CONFEDERATION MEETING

ARA/LA/MRSD OGRADY PASS SUBSTANCE TO AFL-CIO MCCLELLAN AND
AIFLD/W

REF: SANTIAGO 6062 AND 6606

1. SUMMARY. NATIONAL FED. OF STEVEDORES (FEMACH) WITHDREW
ALL 2000-PLUS MEMBERSHIP FROM AFFILIATION TO NATIONAL
MARITIME CONFED (COMACH) IN MEETING HELD OCT 28-30 IN
VALPARAISO. WITHDRAWAL WAS LED BY FEMACH PRES. MARTIN
BUSTOS (EX-COMMUNIST PARTY -PC) OVER OPPOSITION TO
EDUARDO RIOS' ABSENTEE LEADERSHIP OF CONFEDERATION.
LABOR MINISTER NICANOR DIAZ DELIVERED STRONGLY WORDED
WARNING TO MEETING OF DELEGATES THAT IF MAJORITY OF CHRISTIAN
DEMOCRATIC (PDC) LEADERSHIP OF COMACH CONTINUED TO ALLOW
PARTY TO DOMINATE ORGANIZATION, GOC WOULD STOP "POLITICAL
MANIPULATIONS WITH A MILITARY BOOT" END SUMMARY.

2. APPROXIMATELY 300 LEADERS OF COMACH AFFILIATES AS-
SEMBLED IN VALPARAISO OCT 28-30 IN WHAT THEY TERMED AN
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INFORMAL MEETING ("CONSULTIVO") BUT IN FACT WAS

PROBABLY MOST OPEN AND HEATED DISPLAY OF DEMOCRATIC DEBATE TO TAKE PLACE IN CHILE SINCE SEPT 1973. FEMACH LEADERS MARTIN BUSTOS (EX-PC) AND OSCAR FRIAS (PDC) PROVIDED PRINCIPAL ISSUE OF MEETING WITH STRONG ATTACK ON EDUARDO RIOS' "REMOTE CONTROL" OF COMACH FROM SANTIAGO (WHERE RIOS IS HEAD OF NATIONAL UNION COUNCIL -CS), CONCEPCION (WHICH IS HIS HOME AND BASE UNION) AND GENEVA IRIOS JUST RETURNED FROM HEADING LABOR CONTINGENT OF CHILE'S ILO TEAM - SEE SANTIAGO 6062).

3. BUSTOS PROPOSED THAT RIOS RESIGN COMACH PRESIDENCY AND BE REPLACED BY A VALPARAISO LEADER. CLIMAX OF THREE-DAY SESSION CAME WITH DEFEAT OF BUSTOS' PROPOSAL BY TWO TO ONE MARGIN AND SUBSEQUENT FEMACH ANNOUNCEMENT THAT THEY WERE DISAFFILIATING FROM COMACH.

4. ADDITIONAL FIREWORKS WERE PROVIDED BY LABOR MINISTER NICANOR DIAZ IN HIS OCT 30 REMARKS TO CLOSED SESSION OF COMACH DELEGATES. WHILE REITERATING JUNTA'S DESIRE TO PROTECT PAST SOCIAL GAINS OF ORGANIZED LABOR, HE EXPRESSED GOC UNHAPPINESS WITH "POLITICAL MANIPULATION OF COMACH BY PARTY TO WHICH THE MAJORITY OF YOU BELONG" (THE PDC). HE WARNED THAT IF "THIS MANIPULATION DOES NOT CEASE --WE WILL END IT WITH THE PAINFUL USE OF THE MILITARY BOOT." DIAZ' WARNING WAS RECEIVED IN COMPLETE SILENCE.

5. COMMENT. THE BUSTOS-FRIAS MOVE TO CAPTURE CONTROL OF COMACH SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN MOTIVATED ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY BY PERSONAL AMBITIONS OF THE TWO LEADERS. ALTHOUGH THERE SEEM TO BE A FEW POLITICAL OVERTONES, BUSTOS AND FRIAS HAVE BOTH BEEN STRONG AND CONSISTENT SUPPORTERS OF GOVERNING JUNTA.

6. MINISTER DIAZ' WARNING WAS SECOND OF ITS KIND IN PAST FEW WEEKS. SAME MESSAGE IN MUCH MILD FORM WAS OFFERED TO TOP LEADERS OF NATIONAL COPPER WORKERS CONFED. ON OCT 28 (SANTIAGO 6606). GOC CONCERN OVER PDC LABOR ACTIVITIES SEEMS EXAGGERATED. ALTHOUGH PDC IS MOST ACTIVE OF CHILE'S RECESSED PARTIES, IT DOES LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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NOT EXERCISE SUFFICIENT INFLUENCE OVER LABOR CONTINGENCY NOW TO WARRANT DIAZ' COMACH ULTIMATUM.
POPPER

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Message Attributes

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